Sacramento Public Library Authority

October 25, 2012 Agenda Item 7.0: Edge Benchmark Pilot Overview

TO: **Sacramento Public Library Authority Board Members**

FROM: **Denise Davis, Deputy Library Director**

RE: **Edge Benchmark Pilot Overview**

RECOMMENDED ACTION(S): Receive and File.

Edge Benchmark Pilot – Public Access Technology Services at SPL

Driven by a coalition of leading library and government organizations and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Edge Initiative seeks to develop a framework of best practices that will help libraries evaluate, continually improve, and spur reinvestment in their public technology equipment and services.

Sacramento Public Library was honored to be one of eight libraries nationally invited by the Edge Coalition to pilot this initiative to develop benchmarks that measure the quality of public access technology services in public libraries. Coalition members worked closely with the library field to ensure the benchmarks are current, relevant, and valuable.

As part of the pilot process, Sacramento Public Library:

- Gathered extensive data to test the benchmarks and provided feedback on the indicators;
- Reviewed the results with internal and external stakeholders; and
- Defined next steps to improve our technology resources to meet the service needs of our communities.

The Library did very well, but recognizes areas to strengthen technology services for the public:

- Monthly structured and scheduled digital literacy training in all branches, to include:
  - Technology classes in languages other than English
  - Assistance with basic computer skills
  - Assistance with patron-owned devices (e.g. eReaders, iPods and smartphones)
- Individual assistance for digital literacy, ensuring comparable service levels in all branches
- Increase staff technology expertise to better serve patrons and help them achieve their goals

- Support the use of public technology for health and wellness purposes through 2-1-1 service collaboration (this is in process)

Staff would like to thank the external stakeholders for their generous gift of time for the national pilot study: Sophia Scherman (Library Board Chair, City of Elk Grove), (Phil Serna (Sacramento County Board of Supervisors), Angelique Ashby (Sacramento City Council), and Library System Friends members Pauline Grenbeaux and Karen Thomas.

The attached slides outline the Edge Initiative, SPL's results and next steps.

ATTACHMENT(S)
Attachment A: Overview presentation of Edge Benchmark Pilot

WHAT IS THE EDGE INITIATIVE?

Edge is an effort driven by a coalition of leading library and government organizations to develop a framework of best practices that will help libraries evaluate, continually improve, and spur re-investment in their public technology services.

UTILIZING THE RESULTS

ADOPTING EDGE WILL HELP LIBRARY STAFF:

- **Assess** the quality of technology services in:
  - Community Value
  - Engaging the Community
  - Organizational Management
- Determine next steps to **improve** their technology services
- Demonstrate the value and need of **re-investment** to decision makers

CRITICAL 21ST CENTURY DIGITAL ACCESS

- Libraries provide 21st century digital access to information for all people
- Public access technology is a vital service for people and communities
- Libraries must keep pace with ever changing needs

THE PILOT PROCESS

- One of eight libraries piloting the process, compared against a random sample of peers
- Recommended by State Library, selected by ICMA
- The Pilot Process:
  - Gather extensive data to test benchmarks
  - Complete the assessment
  - Provide feedback on the benchmark indicators
  - Test support materials
  - Review the results
  - Define next steps for improvement

OUR STRENGTHS

We scored a total 863.68 points out of 900

- 295 out of 300 on Community Value
- 283.80 out of 300 on Community Engagement
- 284.88 out of 300 on Internal Management

This puts us at the highest level during the beta test

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Although Sacramento scored very well, staff feels improvements are possible in a variety of areas:

- Community Value
  - Digital literacy services to the public
- Community Engagement
  - Feedback loop to access value of digital literacy improvements
- Internal Management
  - Staffing and expertise, technology inclusiveness

OUR COMMUNITY PRIORITIES:

- Monthly structured and scheduled digital literacy training in **all** branches
  - Provides technology classes in languages other than English
  - Basic computer skills
  - Patron-owned devices (e.g., eReaders, iPods, smart phones)
- Individual assistance for digital literacy – ensure comparability in all branches
- Increasing staff technology expertise to better serve patrons and help them achieve their goals – training opportunities
- Support use of public technology for health and wellness purposes through 2-1-1 service collaboration - underway

OUR NEXT STEPS:

We have convened a team to evaluate benchmark results and have prioritized areas for improvement to strategically move our library forward to best meet community needs.

During the next 12 months staff will

- Set goals and timeline for improvements
- Implement improvements
- Re-assess and re-evaluate